(f) the details of steps proposed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (f) Indo-China border trade through Lipulekh Pass was resumed following the signing of an MoU in December 1991. The Protocol for extension of border trade through Shipkila Pass was signed in September 1993. Presently, the border trade with China is being conducted through these two routes. During the visit of former Prime Minister to China in June 2003, the two sides agreed to open a third route at Nathu La for conducting broder trade. During the visit of Chinese Premier to India in April 2005, both sides reviewed with satisfaction the implementation of the memorandum on the border trade throuh Nathu La Pass between the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China and the Sikkim State of the Republic of India.

Fall in Tea Production

4354. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tea production in the country for the period 1st January to 31st December, 2004 was 82.02 crore kilograms as compared to the tea production for the sam period in 2003 which was 85.75 crore kilograms;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the fall in production of tea;

(c) whether it is true that some Northern States like Jammu and Kashmir, Uttaranchai, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh have also reported tea production in recent years; and

(d) if so, what incentives the Ministry proposes to give to these States for the production of tea?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Tea production in the country during 2004 was 820.22 million kg as compared to 857.06 million kg during 2003 was due to unfavourable agro-climatic conditions in North and South India.

(c) and (d) Himachal Pradesh is traditionally a tea-growing State, though

in a limited area. In Uttaranchal, the tea areas have been neglected over time, though the State Government has taken steps to revive the industry. New tea gardens have been establishd in some parts of Bihar.

A number of developmental schemes are being implemented by the Tea Board during the 10th Five Year Plan for enhancing productivity, quality and marketability of tea produced in the country nder which financial and technical assistance is being provided for various plantation development activities, benefits from these schemes are available for the tea gardens located in the various States.

Legislation on SEZ

4355. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposed legislation on SEZ is on the lines of SEZ legilation of China;

(b) if not, how India specific SEZ legislation proposes to foster competition with other countries of the world; and

(c) the details of SEZs in the country, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) A proposal for introduction of a Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Bill taking into account experience of other countries, including China, covering all aspects of establishment, operation and fiscal regime for SEZs is under the consideration of the Government. This is expected to give an internationally competitive duty free environment for exports supported by an incentive package broadly comparable with the facilities offered in other countries of the world.

(c) At present 11, Special Economic Zones at Kandla and Surat (Gujarat), Santa Cruz-Mumbai (Maharashtra), Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Cochin (Kerala), Falta and Salt Lake-Kolkata (West Bengal), Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Noida (UP.), Sitapura-Jaipur (Rajasthan) and Indore (Madhya Pradesh) are in operation.